

Message Text

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21

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 CU-02 /047 W

----- 028878

R 131003Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9542

INFO USIA WASHDC

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE KHARTOUM 0623

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MSNT, SEDU, SU

SUBJ: KHARTOUM UNIVERSITY CLOSED

REF: KHARTOUM A-94

1. KHARTOUM UNIV WAS CLOSED MARCH 12 IN WAKE CONFRONTATION BETWEEN MUSLIM BRETHREN-DOMINATED STUDENT BODY AND ADMINISTRATION OVER ISSUE OF POSTPONEMENT OF SPRING EXAMINATIONS SCHEDULED BEGIN APRIL 12. STUDENTS, WHO IN POLL REPORTEDLY RECEIVED SUPPORT OF 85 PER CENT OF THOSE VOTING AND 70 PER CENT OF ENTIRE STUDENT BODY, DEMANDED POSTPONEMENT ON GROUNDS SCHOOL YEAR WAS TOO SHORT TO COMPLETE REQUIRED WORK. ON OTHER HAND, UNIVERSITY OFFICIALS, BACKED BY COUNCIL AND FACULTY SENATE, REFUSED BUCKLE BEFORE PRESSURE AND VOTED CLOSE UNIVERSITY INSTEAD. THERE NO INDICATION HOW CONFRONTATION CAN BE RESOLVED, IF AT ALL, AND THERE OPEN SPECULATION CLOSURE MIGHT LAST UNTIL JULY, RESULTING IN LOSS OF ENTIRE YEAR'S WORK. MANY FACULTY MEMBERS APPEAR TO BELIEVE EXAMINATION POSTPONEMENT WAS MERE PRETEXT FOR STUDENTS' REAL AIM, I.E. TO EMBARRASS NIMEIRI REGIME.

2. COMMENT: STUDENT POLL REPORTEDLY ENGINEERED BY SMALL COMMUNIST GROUP AS MEANS FORCING MOSLEM BROTHER-DOMINATED STUDENT COUNCIL TO TAKE UP EXAM POSTPONEMENT ISSUE. WHILE STUDENTS HAVE CASE, SINCE LATE COMPLETION OF LAST ACADEMIC YEAR (REFAIR) FORCED ABBREVIATION OF THIS ONE, FACT THEY WAITED UNTIL NOW TO BRING MATTER TO HEAD

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SUGGESTS THEIR MOTIVATION WAS INDEED POLITICAL. AS THEY MUST HAVE

KNOWN, POSTPONEMENT OF EXAMINATIONS IS DIFFICULT ARRANGE AT LAST
MINUTE SINCE IT WOULD REQUIRE CHANGES IN SCHEDULES OF BUSY EX-
TERNAL EXAMINERS FROM UNIVERSITIES ABROAD. ASSUMING NO
FURTHER STEPS (SUCH AS PHYSICAL EXPULSION OF STUDENTS FROM
CAMPUS) ARE TAKEN, FACE-SAVING FORMULA COULD BE DEVISED INVOLVING
RE-OPENING OF UNIVERSITY IN ABOUT TWO WEEKS AND 2-4 WEEK POST-
PONEMENT OF EXAMINATIONS. ON OTHER HAND, GOS MAY DECIDE POLITICAL
CHALLENGE OF STUDENTS IS SUCH BAD PRECEDENT THAT PRICE OF LOST
ACADEMIC YEAR IS WORTH PAYING TO SHOW THEM WHO IS BOSS. AS
SO OFTEN HAPPENS, GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED MEDIA HAVE MADE NO MENTION
OF WHAT IS ALREADY COMMON KNOWLEDGE IN KHARTOUM.
BREWER

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